



CITY OF RANCHO MIRAGE

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Rancho Mirage, California 92270
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ENVIRONMENTAL INITIAL STUDY

Project Title:	Highway 111 Specific Plan
City Project No.:	Highway 111 Specific Plan Case No. SP200001, General Plan Amendment Case No. GPA20001, General Plan & Zoning Map Amendment Case No. GPZMA20001, Environmental Impact Report Case No. EIR20001
Lead Agency Name and Address:	City of Rancho Mirage 69-825 Highway 111 Rancho Mirage, California 92270 Phone: (760) 328-2266 Fax: (760) 324-9851
Project Sponsor's Name and Address:	City of Rancho Mirage 69-825 Highway 111 Rancho Mirage, California 92270
Contact Person And Phone Number:	Majna Dukic, Planning Manager, majnad@RanchoMirageCA.gov Phone: (760) 328-2266 Ext. 210
Project Location:	The planning area of the New 111 Specific Plan extends along the entire length of Highway 111's passage through the City from its shared city limits boundaries on the west with Cathedral City and on the east with Palm Desert. The area is further defined by the general limits of the Whitewater River on the north and the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains on the south. The planning area occurs in portions of: Section 34, T4, R5E; Sections 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, T5S, R5E; and Section 18, T5, R6E, SBB&M (see USGS Cathedral City and Palm Desert 7.5 minute quadrangle maps). APN No.s: numerous.
Project Area:	±684 acres
Proposed Specific Plan Designation:	High Density Residential (R-H); High Density Residential - Specific Plan (R-H-SP); Mixed Use (M-U); General Commercial (C-G); Neighborhood Commercial (C-N); Office (O); Public- City Hall- P/CH; Public- Library- P/L; Public -Post Office- P/PO; Public Park- OS/PP; Floodways and Drainage Channels- OS/W; Right of Way- ROW
Existing General Plan Designation:	High Density Residential (R-H); Medium Density Residential (R-M); Very Low Density Residential (R-L-2); HR (Hillside Reserve); Mixed Use (M-U); General Commercial (C-G); Neighborhood Commercial (C-N); Office (O); Library (P/L); Post Office (P/PO); City Hall (P/CH); Public Park (OS-PP); Floodways and Drainage Channels (OS-W)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	3
EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.....	11
1. AESTHETICS	13
2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES.....	15
3. AIR QUALITY	16
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	17
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES.....	21
6. ENERGY	23
7. GEOLOGY / SOILS	24
8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS	27
9. HAZARDS & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	28
10. HYDROLOGY / WATER QUALITY.....	31
11. LAND USE / PLANNING.....	34
12. MINERAL RESOURCES.....	35
13. NOISE	36
14. POPULATION / HOUSING.....	38
15. PUBLIC SERVICES.....	39
16. RECREATION.....	41
17. TRANSPORTATION	42
18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES	44
19. UTILITIES SERVICE SYSTEMS	46
20. WILDFIRES.....	48
21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	50
REFERENCES.....	51
Table 1: Highway 111 Specific Plan Proposed Land Use Table.....	9
Table 2: Highway 111 Specific Plan Existing Land Use Table	10
Exhibit 1 Regional Location.....	5
Exhibit 2 Project Vicinity Map.....	6
Exhibit 3A Proposed Land Use Map - West	7
Exhibit 3B Proposed Land Use Map – East	8



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 2020 Highway 111 Specific Plan consolidates, updates, expands, and replaces the previously adopted Highway 111 East (1990) and West Specific Plans (1989), both of which were updated in 2014. It revises the land use plan, including some land use designations, acreages, and residential densities, and sets forth development guidelines in the context of 12 planning areas. It enhances the function of Highway 111 as a safe and efficient local and regional travel corridor with a diverse but complementary mix of land uses. Its goals include planning for future development that draws upon local and sub-regional markets and diversifies the City's economic base, resulting in a more diverse and integrated mix of uses, services, and functions. The new Specific Plan establishes a community vision, context, and sense of place through land use development standards and guidelines that are consistent with General Plan goals and policies. The plan coordinates various aspects of sustainability, infrastructure planning, infill development, and lot consolidation, where appropriate. Finally, for those that travel through the City via Highway 111, Specific Plan implementation will result in a more attractive place with a variety of "destinations" that include high-quality retail, restaurants, hotels, offices, residential developments, and important cultural assets that have and continue to develop along the corridor.

The planning area of the New 111 Specific Plan extends along the entire length (4.5± miles) of Highway 111's passage through the City from its shared city limits boundaries on the west with Cathedral City to those shared on the east with Palm Desert. The area is further defined by the general limits of the Whitewater River on the north and the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains on the south and encompasses 684± acres. The Specific Plan planning area location is shown on Exhibits 1 and 2. The proposed land use plan and planning area boundaries are shown on Exhibits 3A and 3B.

Current Conditions

Highway 111 is built out as a three-lane divided arterial highway with excellent vehicular access and pedestrian facilities, and numerous transit stops. The corridor also has numerous and largely signalized intersections that connect it to the surrounding residential and resort neighborhoods.

The west end of the corridor extends west from Country Club Drive to the west city limits and includes well-established restaurants, City Hall, and limited retail services. It is comprised of a mix of office, residential and limited commercial uses, including several well-known restaurants in an area that, in the past, was referred to as "Restaurant Row." The west planning area offers new development opportunities, including the 30-acre Bighorn Cove, the 13± acre Rancho Cove, and commercial and in-fill residential development opportunities in the Thunder Road planning area.

The central portion of the 111 corridor, generally between Country Club Drive on the west and Paxton Drive on the east, is mostly made up of gated residential developments with direct access onto Highway 111. The southern portion of the corridor includes a generous and well landscaped parkway with continuous sidewalks and an additional multi-use trail in some locations. City Fire Station No. 50 is also located on the south side of this portion of the corridor. The north 111 parkway in the central corridor is comprised of a narrow planting area and fenestrated masonry wall; there are no sidewalks between Paxton Drive and Country Club Drive on the north side of this central corridor.

The east end of the 111 corridor has captured most of the larger scale commercial development, including *The River* regional commercial development and the Rancho Las Palmas shopping center, located on the north side of 111 and west and east of Bob Hope Drive, respectively. The east planning areas also include Desert European Motor Cars, numerous restaurants, two hotels, and a wide mix of office and related services, as well as the City Library and Observatory and one larger vacant opportunity site with a development area of 16± acres. The area also hosts a variety of smaller in-fill lots surrounded by commercial, service commercial, and office development.



Purpose and Need

The Highway 111 corridor has evolved significantly over the course of many decades. Today, it serves as both a major commercial corridor in Rancho Mirage and adjacent communities, and a sub-regional thoroughfare that connects the “cove communities” and others in the Coachella Valley. Highway 111 is no longer as important as a regional highway but has become more of an intra-regional, arterial-scale connector of contiguous communities. Regional traffic is primarily accommodated by US Interstate 10 and, to a lesser extent, other major arterials, including Dinah Shore Drive, Gerald Ford Drive, Frank Sinatra Drive, and Country Club Drive. This shift in regional mobility functions allows for more focus on the local and intra-city function of Highway 111.

The 111 corridor is physically constrained by the Whitewater River and the Santa Rosa Mountains, which limit the size and scale of development that can occur along the corridor. At the same time, these “constraints” should be viewed as assets that enhance the attractiveness and desirability of the corridor as a place to visit and stay, shop, recreate, and live. There are a few remaining undeveloped land holdings of size that can accommodate larger and mixed-use development. There are also numerous vacant in-fill lots that can be developed individually or aggregated to enhance existing development.

Project Location and Limits

The Specific Plan project is located in the Coachella Valley region of central Riverside County. The planning area occurs in portions of: Section 34, T4, R5E; Sections 2, 3, 11, 12, 13 T5S, R5E; and Section 18, T5, R6E, SBB&M (see USGS Cathedral City and Palm Desert 7.5 minute quadrangle maps). The proposed Specific Plan planning area includes numerous parcels and is divided into 12 planning areas (see Exhibit 3A and 3B). Its limits are defined by topography, drainage features and corporate city limits, and includes the full length of Highway 111 as it passes through the City of Rancho Mirage.

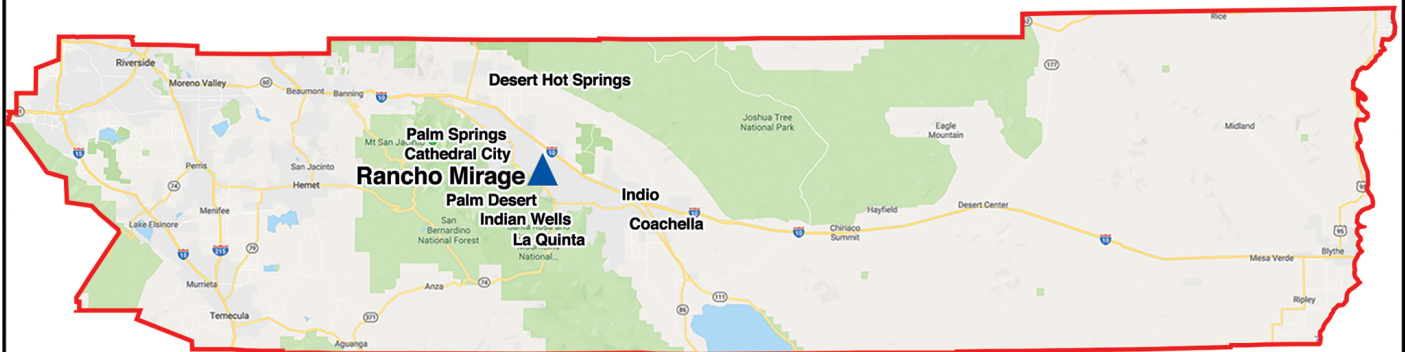
Surrounding Land Uses

West: City of Cathedral City (commercial and residential development, mountainous areas)
North: City of Rancho Mirage (residential development, open spaces, and the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel)
South: City of Rancho Mirage mountainous areas and limited residential and resort development
East: City of Palm Desert (commercial and residential development).

CALIFORNIA

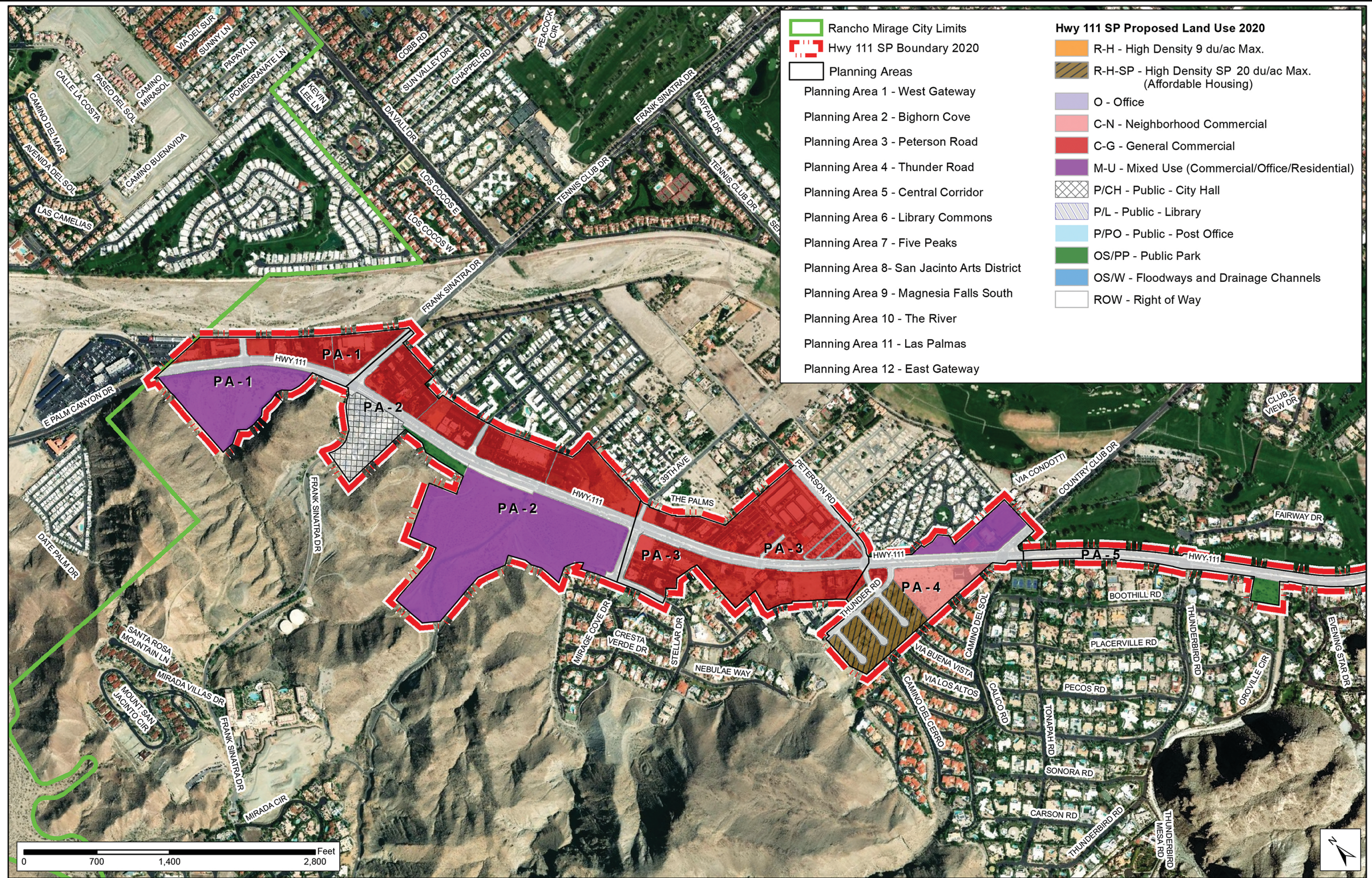
PACIFIC
OCEAN

MEXICO



RIVERSIDE COUNTY





Source: City of Rancho Mirage, 2017; Terra Nova Planning, ESRI, 2020

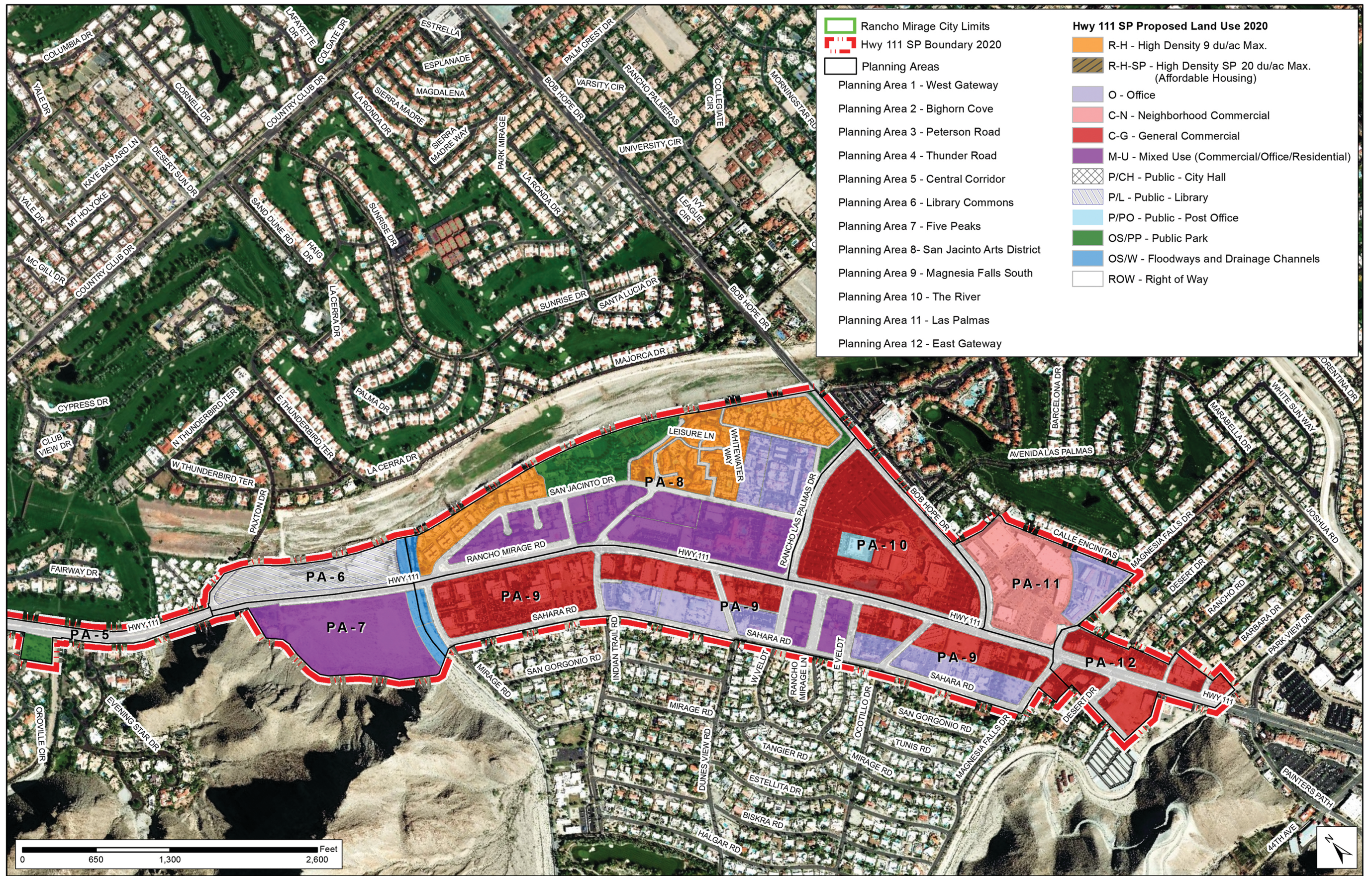




Table 1: Highway 111 Specific Plan Proposed Land Use Table

Land Use Designation	Developed Acres	Vacant Acres	Developable Vacant Acres ¹	Total Acres	Existing Units ²	Potential Units ³	Total Units
<u>Residential Designations</u>							
High Density (R-H) (9 du/ac max)	35	0	0	35	225	0	225
High Density - Specific Plan (R-H-SP) (28 du/ac max)	7	6	6	13	29	168	197
Mixed Use (M-U) ⁶	18	46	36	64	74	1,008	1,082
Residential Subtotal:	60	52	42	112	328	1,176	1,504
<u>Commercial Designations</u>							
					Existing Sq Ft⁴	Potential Sq Ft⁵	Total Sq Ft
General Commercial (C-G)	186	26	17	212	2,835,756	259,182	3,094,938
Neighborhood Commercial (C-N)	24	8	7	32	313,632	91,476	405,108
Office (O)	38	5	4	43	579,348	60,984	640,332
Mixed Use (M-U) ⁶	27	69	55	96	353,358	838,530	1,191,888
Commercial Subtotal:	275	108	83	383	4,082,094	1,250,172	5,332,266
<u>Institutional Designations</u>							
Public - Library (P/L)	10	4	4	14	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public -City Hall (P/CH)	9	0	0	9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public - Post Office (P/PO)	2	0	0	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Institutional Subtotal:	21	4	4	25	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Open Space Designations</u>							
Open Space - Public Park (OS/PP)	18	2	2	20	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space - Floodways and Drainage (OS/W)	0	6	1	6	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space Subtotal:	18	8	3	26	N/A	N/A	N/A
Land Use Total Acreage:	374	172	132	546			
Street ROW Total Acreage:				138			
Grand Total (ac):				684			

1. Excludes land above toe-of-slope.
 2. Estimate based on a combination of sources, including Google Earth, ESRI, and City housing data.
 3. Future residential development potential. Developable vacant acres x maximum density allowed, consistent with methodology used in General Plan Land Use Element Exhibit 4. M-U residential assumes maximum density of 28 du/ac.
 4. Estimate assumes existing development has occurred at maximum allowed Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Developed acres x 43,560 sf x the following FARs: C-G = 35%; C-N = 30%; O = 35%; M-U = 35%, consistent with General Plan Land Use Element Table 3 and Municipal Code Section 17.10.020. For M-U methodology, see footnote 6.
 5. Future commercial development potential. Developable vacant acres x 43,560 sf x FAR described in footnote 4.
 6. Assumes M-U acreage is 60% commercial land uses and 40% residential land uses. Existing M-U commercial square footage is estimated using the formula in footnote 4, reduced by the number of square feet of existing residential development in the M-U designation.
- * Due to idiosyncrasies associated with GIS-based measurements, acreages have been rounded to the nearest acre.



Table 2: Highway 111 Specific Plan Existing Land Use Table

Land Use Designation	Developed Acres	Vacant Acres	Developable Vacant Acres ¹	Total Acres	Existing Units ²	Potential Units ³	Total Units
<u>Residential Designations</u>							
Very Low Density (R-L-2) (2 du/ac max)	0	2	2	2	0	4	4
High Density (R-H) (9 du/ac max)	25	13	6	38	186	54	240
Mixed Use (M-U) ⁶	19	9	8	28	142	72	214
Residential Subtotal:	44	24	16	68	328	130	458
<u>Commercial Designations</u>							
					Existing Sq Ft⁴	Potential Sq Ft⁵	Total Sq Ft
General Commercial (C-G)	170	85	68	255	2,591,820	1,036,728	3,628,548
Neighborhood Commercial (C-N)	79	30	26	109	1,032,372	339,768	1,372,140
Office (O)	17	6	5	23	259,182	76,230	335,412
Mixed Use (M-U) ⁶	28	14	12	42	218,322	182,952	401,274
Commercial Subtotal:	294	135	111	429	4,101,696	1,635,678	5,737,374
<u>Institutional Designations</u>							
Public - Library (P/L)	10	4	4	14	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public - City Hall (P/CH)	9	0	0	9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public - Post Office (P/PO)	4	0	0	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Institutional Subtotal:	23	4	4	27	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Open Space Designations</u>							
Open Space - Public Park (OS/PP)	13	0	0	13	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space - Floodways and Drainage (OS/W)	0	6	1	6	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space - Mountain Reserve (MR)	0	3	0	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space Subtotal:	13	9	1	22	N/A	N/A	N/A
Land Use Total Acreage:	374	172	132	546			
Street ROW Total Acreage:				138			
Grand Total (ac):				684			

1. Excludes land above toe-of-slope.
 2. Estimate based on a combination of sources, including Google Earth, ESRI, and City housing data.
 3. Future residential development potential. Developable vacant acres x maximum density allowed, consistent with methodology used in General Plan Land Use Element Exhibit 4. M-U residential assumes maximum density of 9 du/ac, per 2014 East Highway 111 Specific Plan Table 6.
 4. Estimate assumes existing development has occurred at maximum allowed Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Developed acres x 43,560 sf x the following FARs: C-G = 35%; C-N = 30%; O = 35%; M-U = 35%, consistent with General Plan Land Use Element Table 3 and Municipal Code Section 17.10.020.
 5. Future commercial development potential. Developable vacant acres x 43,560 sf x FAR described in footnote 4.
 6. Assumes M-U acreage is 60% commercial land uses and 40% residential land uses. Existing M-U commercial square footage is estimated using the formula in footnote 4, reduced by the number of square feet of existing residential development in the M-U designation.
- * Due to idiosyncrasies associated with GIS-based measurements, acreages have been rounded to the nearest acre.



EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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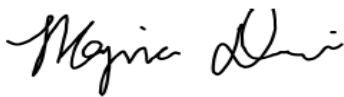
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Geology /Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hydrology / Water Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Land Use / Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Noise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Population / Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Utilities / Service Systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wildfires	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory Findings of Significance



DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

 _____ Signature: Majna Dukic, Planning Manager City of Rancho Mirage	 5/29/2020 _____ Date:
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Environmental Checklist and Discussion:

The following checklist evaluates the proposed project's potential adverse impacts. For those environmental topics for which a potential adverse impact may exist, a discussion of the existing site environment related to the topic is presented followed by an analysis of the project's potential adverse impacts. When the project does not have any potential for adverse impacts for an environmental topic, the reasons why there are no potential adverse impacts are described.

1. AESTHETICS – Except as provided in Public Resource Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Rancho Mirage Zoning Ordinance, as amended; Officially Designated State Scenic Highways Map, Caltrans.

Background

The Coachella Valley and the Highway 111 corridor area are distinguished by the low-lying desert valley floor surrounded by the high terrain of the San Jacinto, San Bernardino, Little San Bernardino, and Santa Rosa Mountains. These contrasting viewsheds result in an exceptional display of open space and mountain scenery that is a major component of the aesthetic quality of the area. The mountainous areas that ring the Coachella Valley are comprised of a variety of rock formations including darkly varnished rock that contrasts with large expanses of light gray granite, and a diversity of vegetation. Views of the mountain ranges and the limited expanses of desert floor that are visible within the project planning area are highly valued.

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed Specific Plan update and expansion will supersede the 2014 Rancho Mirage Highway 111 East & West Specific Plans, and will include new and revised land uses and design guidelines addressing landscaping, architecture, circulation, and other elements of the built environment. Development in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan could potentially impact scenic vistas in Rancho Mirage, including mountain views as seen from the southern portion of the City. The Specific Plan proposed to allow taller residential buildings than is currently permitted, which could impact scenic views in some locations. The EIR will evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed Specific Plan on scenic vistas. Mitigation measures will be recommended as appropriate.
- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The segment of Highway 111 within the planning area is designated a state scenic highway in the California State Scenic Highway Program and a View Corridor in the General Plan (General Plan Exhibit 32). Development in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan could potentially impact scenic resources in the vicinity of Highway 111; however, development and improvements will be



consistent with the urban character of the corridor. The planning area does not contain historic buildings or notable trees. The Specific Plan does not propose development above the toe-of-slope of the mountains and preserves open spaces in the planning area. Impacts are not expected to be significant. Nonetheless, the EIR will evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed Specific Plan, and mitigation measures will be recommended as appropriate.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Specific Plan planning area is an urbanized area. The Specific Plan will include development standards and guidelines pertaining to visual and scenic resources that are specifically tailored to development in the Specific Plan area, and they will vary from those in the Zoning Ordinance. However, they will be consistent with the City's vision for protecting and enhancing its visual resources, as set forth in the Rancho Mirage General Plan, and are expected to have a net positive impact on the visual quality of the planning area. The potential effects of the proposed Specific Plan will be further analyzed in the EIR.
- d) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** It is uncertain whether or to what extent the proposed Specific Plan may result in substantial and potentially adverse impacts associated with light or glare. The potential effects of the Specific Plan and the potential need for mitigation measures will be further analyzed in an EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES -- In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program, 2016.

Background:

The City of Rancho Mirage contains no agricultural or forest lands, and no lands are designated for agricultural or forestry purposes in the General Plan. Agricultural production occurs in the eastern Coachella Valley, more than 10 miles east of the City.

- a-e) **No Impact.** The planning area is comprised of developed and undeveloped parcels. There are no farmlands in the vicinity of the planning area as designated by the General Plan Land Use Map or Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Department of Conservation. Additionally, the planning area is not located on lands zoned for agriculture and is not covered by a Williamson Act contract. The Specific Plan will not affect forest lands or convert agricultural or forest lands to non-agricultural or non-forest uses. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan will have no impact on agricultural or forest resources.

Mitigation: None required

Monitoring: None required



3. AIR QUALITY – Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: SCAQMD AQMP, 2016; Coachella Valley PM₁₀ SIP, 2003.

Background:

The proposed Specific Plan will establish development standards and guidelines that could result in building demolition, site grading, and new development that has the potential to impact air quality, including the emissions of particulates (PM₁₀), ozone precursors, and other criteria pollutants.

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The City of Rancho Mirage, including the Specific Plan planning area, is subject to the provisions of the 2016 South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Air Quality Management Plan, which describes the District's plan to achieve Federal and State air quality standards set forth in Federal and State Clean Air Acts. Rancho Mirage is located in the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) and is subject to the rules and regulations imposed by the SCAQMD, including Rule 403-1, which governs fugitive dust emissions from construction within the Coachella Valley. The proposed Specific Plan will be consistent with the goals and policies of the Rancho Mirage General Plan. Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan planning area can, with mitigation, be developed in such a manner that does not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SCAQMD air quality management plan. Nonetheless, this potential will be further analyzed in the forthcoming EIR.
- b, c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** An impact is considered potentially significant if concentrations of emissions exceed the State or Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards. The two primary pollutants of concern in the Coachella Valley, including the City of Rancho Mirage, are ozone (O₃) and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}).

Ozone (O₃) is formed when byproducts of combustion react in the presence of ultraviolet sunlight. This process occurs in the atmosphere where oxides of nitrogen combine with reactive organic gases, such as hydrocarbons, in the presence of sunlight. Ozone is a pungent, colorless, toxic gas, and a common component of photochemical smog. Although also produced within the Coachella Valley, most ozone pollutants are transported by coastal air mass from the Los Angeles and Riverside/San Bernardino air basins, thereby contributing to occasionally high ozone concentrations in the Valley. The Coachella Valley has a history of exceeding regulatory ozone standards, although the number of days and months the Federal one-hour standard is exceeded has dropped steadily over the past decade.



Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) consists of fine suspended particles of ten microns or smaller in diameter, and is the byproduct of road dust, sand, diesel soot, windstorms, and the abrasion of tires and brakes. The elderly, children, and adults with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular disease are most susceptible to the effects of PM. Elevated PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} levels are also associated with an increase in mortality rates, respiratory infections, occurrences and severity of asthma attacks, and hospital admissions. The SSAB is a non-attainment area for PM₁₀ and is classified as attainment/unclassifiable for PM_{2.5}.

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), in conjunction with the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), Riverside County, and Rancho Mirage and other local jurisdictions, prepared the "2003 Coachella Valley PM₁₀ State Implementation Plan," which includes PM₁₀ control program enhancements and requests an extension of the region's PM₁₀ attainment date. The Coachella Valley is designated as a serious non-attainment area for PM₁₀ and is subject to the 2003 State Implementation Plan (SIP) and local dust control regulations and guidelines. A State Implementation Plan that addresses how Southern California will meet federal standards for finer particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) was adopted in 2007. The Coachella Valley is designated as unclassifiable/attainment for PM_{2.5}.

At this time, it is not known whether or to what extent development and improvements facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan will impact non-attainment criteria pollutants, or whether they will expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant emissions. The City has determined that an air quality study and report should be prepared to further evaluate the potential for significant levels of air pollutants related to the Specific Plan. To determine if the Specific Plan has the potential to result in significant adverse localized air quality impacts, the appropriate Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Look-Up Table for SRA 30 (Coachella Valley) should be utilized. LSTs will be evaluated and summarized in the aforementioned air quality impact analysis and presented in the forthcoming EIR. Potential air quality impacts will be assessed in an air quality analysis and further documented in the forthcoming EIR.

- d) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** Development and improvements facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan have the potential to result in short-term odors associated with operation of heavy equipment during grading, excavation, and other construction activities. However, construction-related odors would be temporary and quickly dispersed below detectable levels as distance from the construction area increases. During operation, development facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan may include restaurants and other uses that could emit odors. Impacts will be evaluated in the forthcoming EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan, 2017; Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), 2007.

Background:

The proposed Specific Plan is a regulatory document that, in and of itself, will not impact biological resources. However, development and improvements facilitated by the Plan could result in building demolition, site grading, and new development that have the potential to impact biological resources in the planning area. The planning area includes currently undeveloped desert lands that may harbor bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and/or other species not covered or addressed by the Coachella Valley MSHCP.

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** Most of the planning area is developed and does not contain habitat suitable for special status species. Vacant land in the planning area is generally adjacent to or in proximity to roadways and other development that limits potential use by sensitive species. However, some may offer nesting sites for birds protected by the international Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and/or habitat for other sensitive species.

The potential for development and other improvements facilitated by the Specific Plan to directly or indirectly impact special status species, and the need for mitigation, will vary on a site-specific basis. With the implementation of species-sensitive development schedules and/or conducting pre-construction species surveys, as appropriate, future development as a result of the Specific Plan is not expected to have a substantial effect on sensitive plant or wildlife species, federally listed species, or state species of concern,



or their habitats. The proposed Specific Plan will not conflict with any local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, including those of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Potential impacts to special status species will be evaluated further in the EIR.

- b) **Less Than Significant.** There is no known riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities within the planning area. However, vacant land adjacent to the Santa Rosa Mountains could be subject to runoff from mountain drainages and, therefore, could potentially contain riparian habitat. Future development of these lands, as facilitated by the Specific Plan, could potentially impact such resources. Implementation of the CVMSHCP and Trial HCP affords some protection for habitats, including riparian habitat, and impacts to biological resources as a result of the proposed Specific Plan are expected to be less than significant. Nonetheless, this potential will be further assessed in the forthcoming EIR.
- c) **Less Than Significant.** Potential U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) jurisdictional waters and wetlands within the City are typically limited to drainages within and adjacent to the Santa Rosa Mountains. Portions of the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel and tributaries could also be considered under USACE jurisdiction. The Specific Plan planning area includes portions of the West Magnesia Storm Channel; however, these lands are designated as Open Space/Floodways and Channel Drainages (OS/W) in the proposed Specific Plan. Vacant land adjacent to the Santa Rosa Mountains could be subject to runoff from mountain drainages, and future development facilitated by the Specific Plan could result in removal, fill, or interruption of these resources. Potential impacts should be further evaluated in an EIR.
- d) **Less Than Significant.** Most of the Specific Plan planning area is developed or surrounded by development and not used or suitable for a wildlife corridor, and it is not located within or adjacent to a known wildlife corridor. Undeveloped portions of the planning area, particularly those near the Santa Rosa Mountains and Whitewater River Stormwater Channel and West Magnesia Storm Channel, may be utilized as migratory corridors for the movement of wildlife, particularly migratory bird species protected under the MBTA, as discussed above in 4.a, above. However, wildlife movement between these areas is largely prevented by existing development. Nonetheless, the forthcoming EIR should further evaluate these potential impacts and the need for mitigation to ensure that they will not be significant.
- e, f) **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The City of Rancho Mirage participates in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), a comprehensive regional plan encompassing approximately 1.1 million acres and conserving approximately 240,000 acres of open space. The Plan is intended to address the conservation needs of a variety of plant and animal species and natural vegetation communities that occur in the Coachella Valley region. It establishes a system of preserves outside of urbanized areas in the valley in order to protect lands with high conservation value. It streamlines permitting processes by implementing state and federal endangered species acts while providing for land development within its planning area.

The City is a permittee under the CVMSHCP and portions of the proposed Specific Plan area are located near or adjacent to lands designated as Conservation Areas established by the CVMSHCP. Future development has the potential to adversely impact sensitive habitat in the area, potentially conflicting with City policies to protect sensitive biological resources. To some extent, potential impacts of future development facilitated by the Specific Plan to covered species and plant communities would be accounted for and offset through payment of development impact fees. The EIR should further evaluate the potential for development facilitated by the Specific Plan to adversely affect sensitive biological resources.



The West Gateway Planning Area consists of tribal lands covered under the Agua Caliente Tribal Habitat Conservation Plan (Tribal HCP) (2010). The Tribal HCP was established to protect and manage natural resources and habitat within the Tribe's jurisdictional territory, and to establish consistency and streamline permitting requirements with respect to protected species. Its primary conservation mechanisms include creation of a Habitat Preserve; adoption of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to enhance the habitats and survivability of Covered species; and payment of a mitigation fee that funds Tribal acquisition and management of replacement habitat.

The Forthcoming EIR will determine whether and to what extent buildout of the Specific Plan will conflict with the CVMSHCP or Tribal HCP.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



5. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Rancho Mirage General Plan EIR, 2006; City of Rancho Mirage Historic Resources Survey, 2003; Cultural Resources Report/Rancho Mirage General Plan, CRM TECH, 1996.

Background:

The Project planning area encompasses 684± acres generally located between the Santa Rosa foothills and the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel, about 74% of which is developed. Vacant lands in the planning area include three “coves” abutting the foothills, one of which has been disturbed and on which major flood control facilities have been constructed. Highway 111 itself is a road with a history that stretches back centuries when it was the route of the Cocomaricopa Trail used by Native Americans and later by early Europeans. In the Project vicinity, numerous Native American cultural resources, including pottery scatters, grinding rocks, trail segments, and rock cairn features, have been found and documented. While the planning area does not provide perennial or even seasonal waters sources, it may have provided valuable food and fiber resources. It also harbors or is located near important historic structures that could be affected directly or indirectly by the proposed Project.

The proposed Specific Plan facilitates future development and improvements in the planning area that could result in disturbance to or destruction of sensitive cultural resources or sites, historic buildings and/or structure demolition, and new development that have the potential to impact previously unknown cultural resources, including historical and archaeological resources.

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The City of Rancho Mirage has prepared surveys of potential archaeological and historic resources in the City. This inventory includes properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, California Registered Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and properties reviewed by the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) as part of a historic resources survey or an environmental review. There are no registered historic resources in the planning area. The nearest designated such resource is the Frank Morgan residence at 71-845 Sahara Road, located immediately south of the Magnesia Falls South Planning Area. The planning area does harbor potentially important architectural examples, including the *Desert Braemar Apartments*, *Rancho Super Car Wash*, and *Blue Skies Village*. While potential impacts should be mitigatable, this potential should be further analysed in the Project EIR.
- b) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** As noted in the background discussion above, portions of the planning area contain culturally sensitive areas. While most of the planning areas has been developed or previously disturbed, there are vacant lands in the West Gateway, Bighorn Cove, and Five Peaks planning areas west of Highway 111. Future development in these areas, as facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan, could have the potential to uncover archaeological resources. Potential impacts will be identified and mitigation and minimization measures will be included in the forthcoming EIR, as appropriate, to avoid or reduce potential impacts to sensitive archaeological resources.



- c) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The planning area is partially within the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Reservation and entirely within the traditional use area of the Cahuilla people, as evidenced by the discovery of Native American cultural resources in the area. The planning area contains some previously undisturbed lands, and future development and improvements facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan may lead to the discovery of human remains. The forthcoming EIR should further evaluate this potential and cite appropriate mitigation and minimization measures, including that if human remains are discovered during project construction, state law requires that law enforcement be contacted, and the remains removed in a prescribed manner.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



6. ENERGY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017.

Background:

Primary energy sources include energy, fossil fuels (oil, coal and natural gas), nuclear, and renewable sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, and hydropower. In addition to utility-provided electrical power, many homes and business are installing rooftop solar and storage, and new construction and renovation is required to conform to the state's strict green building code, which further serves to ensure that energy resources are used economically and wisely. Both the regulatory environment and the economy have moved aggressively toward greater energy efficiency and reliance on non-polluting renewables sources, and the subject Specific Plan further encourages and facilitates this trend.

It should also be noted that the City has established the *Rancho Mirage Energy Authority* (RMEA), which is a local renewable electric service provider. City customers are automatically benefit from RMEA's 5% discount on electricity. Solar customers are automatically enrolled into RMEA's net metering program that offers standard benefits plus RMEA doubles the rebate for excess energy put back onto the grid over the SCE rebate. There is no registration process. Only customers electing to Opt-Up to the RMEA's 100% renewable plan, Premium Renewable Choice, or customers electing to Opt-Out of RMEA and stay with SCE at higher rates need to take action. The RMEA makes it easy for residents and businesses to take advantage of renewable sources of electric power.

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The planning area is located within the service boundaries of Southern California Edison (electric power) and SoCalGas (natural gas) and is well-served by these providers. The region also receives high rates of solar insolation which is optimal for on-site solar-generated electricity (and thermal energy). The proposed Specific Plan will incorporate and promote sustainable building design, including energy efficient buildings and structures that could potentially accommodate solar electric and/or thermal systems, as well as sustainable landscape design, synergistic land use planning, and multimodal circulation improvements that reduce energy consumption. The forthcoming EIR should analyze expected performance levels for both construction and operations of future development facilitated by the Specific Plan and evaluate the effects of renewable systems where proposed.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed Specific Plan will not obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or to achieve greater energy efficiency. No impact would occur.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017, Exhibits 21-25; Natural Hazard Mapping, Analysis, and Mitigation: a Technical Background Report in Support of the Safety Element of the New Riverside County 2015 General Plan, prepared by Earth Consultants International on August 2000.

Background:

The planning area lies within the western portion of the Coachella Valley, which is the northwestern extension of the Salton Trough, a tectonic depression formed by regional faulting. The Salton Trough is roughly 130 miles long and 70 miles wide and extends from the San Geronio Pass to the Gulf of Mexico. Regional soils range from rocky outcrops within the mountains bordering the valley to coarse gravels of mountain canyons and recently laid fine- and medium-grained alluvial (stream-deposited) and aeolian (wind-deposited) sediments on the central valley floor. Sediments from the surrounding mountains are carried into and across the Coachella Valley through numerous seasonal streams. The Whitewater River and its extension, the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, are the master drainage for the valley, which generally flows northwest to southeast. Episodic flooding of major regional drainages results in the deposition of sand and gravel on the valley floor.



- a) i. **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The planning area is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone, nor are there active faults located in the planning area or Project vicinity. Therefore, there is no identified threat of ground rupture due to an earthquake on an underlying fault. The nearest active faults are those associated with the San Andreas Fault Zone located $7.5\pm$ miles northeast of the planning area. The entire Coachella Valley, including the Project planning area, could be subject to significant levels of groundshaking in the event of a major quake on the San Andreas Fault. Impacts associated with fault rupture in the planning area will be further analyzed in the EIR. Potential hazards associated with regional faulting will be further addressed in the forthcoming EIR.
- ii. **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The City of Rancho Mirage is located in a region where numerous active earthquake faults are present. The San Andreas Fault is capable of generating a moment magnitude 7.4 earthquake. At least two active branches of the San Andreas Fault Zone pass northwest/southeast through the valley north of the city limits. The Specific Plan planning area could be significantly affected by faulting along the San Andreas Fault Zone. Other faults in the region, such as the San Jacinto and San Gorgonio Pass faults, also have the potential to produce strong ground shaking in Rancho Mirage. The planning area would be exposed to strong ground shaking during a major quake on nearby faults, and could expose people and structures to risks associated with strong seismic ground shaking. The forthcoming EIR should consider site and building design and engineering that mitigates the ground shaking threat in the area.
- iii. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Ground failure can take the form of liquefaction, landsliding (see 7.a.iv, below), and lateral spreading (see 7.c, below). The Rancho Mirage General Plan indicates the majority of the planning area is moderately susceptible to liquefaction, although the depth to groundwater is generally greater than that associated with liquefaction. This area is characterized by fine-grained granular sediments that are normally susceptible to liquefaction, but groundwater depths are greater than 50 feet which typically precludes liquefaction. The potential for liquefaction in general is possible where near-surface alluvial sediments become saturated as a result of persistent seasonal precipitation and excessive irrigation. In general, water percolates rapidly through alluvial materials, so the likelihood of an earthquake occurring while these sediments are saturated in the upper 50 feet is very low. Development facilitated by the Specific Plan could alter the exposure of people to risks associated with ground failure. The forthcoming EIR should assess this risk and describe design and other measures that will mitigate these hazards.
- iv. **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The Rancho Mirage General Plan indicates that the Highway 111 corridor has a landslide and rockfall susceptibility that ranges from low to high, depending on distance from the slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains. Development facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan could alter the exposure of people to landslide and rockfall risks. The forthcoming EIR should further evaluate potential risks and describe design and other measures that will mitigate these hazards.
- b) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** According to the Rancho Mirage General Plan, the majority of the planning area is within a moderate wind erosion hazard zone. Some areas east of Highway 111, such as the part of the Magnesia Falls North planning area, are subject to severe wind erosion hazard. Future development and improvements facilitated by the Specific Plan will involve ground disturbance, which has the potential to increase soil erosion. Contractors will be required to implement project-specific dust control management plans as part of the grading permit process to minimize potential impacts caused by blowing dust and sand during construction. At buildout, the planning area will include new structures, paved roads and parking areas, new landscaping and otherwise stabilized surfaces, which will resist erosion. Potential impacts of the Specific Plan and specific mitigation measures, where appropriate, will be set forth in the EIR.



- c) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** According to the Rancho Mirage General Plan, the planning area is moderately susceptible to liquefaction or lateral spreading. The Highway 111 corridor has a landslide and rockfall susceptibility that ranges from low to high, depending on distance from the slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains. The alluvial and aeolian sediments in the planning area are prone to collapse, and the risk of seismically induced settlement in the planning area ranges from low to high depending on site-specific characteristics. These potential hazards should be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of geotechnical studies for future development. Mitigation can be accomplished through a variety of design, engineering and construction methods. Building and seismic code requirements assure that the potential impact associated with ground subsidence, rockfall, land slide or related hazards is reduced to less than significant levels through thoughtful site planning, conventional site preparation techniques such as over-excavation, hydroconsolidation, and compaction. Development and improvements facilitated by the Specific Plan could increase these potential hazards. Potential risks should be further evaluated in an EIR.
- d) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** According to the Rancho Mirage General Plan EIR (2006), the planning area is primarily made up of fine and coarse sand deposits with moderate to high permeability, except where silt layers may retard the downward percolation of water. As a result, the potential for expansive soils is generally low, except where floodplain deposits of silt and clay are exposed. Potential impacts of the Specific Plan and specific mitigation measures, where appropriate, will be set forth in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** The developed areas of the planning area are well-served by the sewer system, except a limited portion of Thunder Road neighborhood, which relies upon septic systems. Undeveloped areas west of Highway 111 in the West Gateway, Bighorn Cove, and Library Commons planning areas have limited connections to the sewer system; however, new development facilitated by the Specific Plan will be connected to the sewer system. The Specific Plan will not result in new septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No impact is expected.
- f) **No Impact.** The planning area is located on the valley floor where soils to depth are largely comprised of recently deposited aeolian and alluvial sediments that typically do not harbor paleontological resources. The site is not located in proximity to either a wash outflow or bedrock that could harbor such resources. Neither is the site of lacustrine origin. Therefore, potentially sensitive paleontological resources are not expected to occur on site and there will be no impact to such resources.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan, 2017; SCAQMD AQMP, 2016. Coachella Valley PM₁₀ SIP, 2003; California Air Resource Board, website, <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/ccms/ccms.htm>.

Background:

Greenhouse gases (GHG), including carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and fluorinated gases (hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulfur hexafluoride), are released into the atmosphere through natural processes and human activities. These gases are termed greenhouse gases due to their shared characteristic of trapping heat, and they are believed to be responsible for the global average increase in surface temperatures of 0.7-1.5°F that were observed during the 20th century. The quantity of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has increased significantly over a relatively short period. Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas that has raised the most concern of atmospheric scientists due to current atmospheric levels, current and projected emission levels. Sources of GHGs include burning of fossil fuels, emission of volatile gases including and especially natural gas, and other chemical compounds. Development facilitated by the Specific Plan could result in increased emissions of GHGs.

- a, b) **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** Demolition and construction activities as a result of the Specific Plan will generate short-term GHG emissions during building removal, grading, excavation, new building construction, and paving. Construction and operational activities of future development are expected to generate carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e). Construction-related greenhouse gas emissions will be temporary and end once projects are completed, and they are not expected to interfere with meeting the objectives of AB 32. Potential greenhouse gases generated from construction and Specific Plan related project operations, including induced motor vehicle travel, will be quantified and mitigated, as necessary, in the forthcoming EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; County of Riverside Environmental Impact Report No. 521 Public Review Draft, February 2015; California Department of Toxic Substances Control “EnviroStor” Database, accessed March 2020.

Background:

A hazardous material is any substance that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical properties, may pose a hazard to human health and the environment. Under Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), the term “hazardous substance” refers to both hazardous materials and hazardous wastes. Both of these are classified according to four properties: (1) ignitability; (2) corrosivity; (3) reactivity; and (4) toxicity.

A hazardous material is defined as a substance or combination of substances which may either (1) cause, or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible, or incapacitating reversible illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of or otherwise managed. Existing development in the Project planning area includes large and small commercial enterprises, auto dealerships and related maintenance facilities, gasoline service stations, numerous restaurants and other potential generators of hazardous materials. Comparable development, and additional residential development, would be facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan.

- a-b) **Less Than Significant.** Hazardous materials are transported through Rancho Mirage along Highway 111 and other designated truck routes and local roads in the planning area. Demolition and construction activities facilitated by the Specific Plan will involve the use of heavy equipment which could require minor maintenance and re-fueling on location, and could lead to fuel and oil spills if not properly managed. Contractors will be required to identify staging areas for storing materials and equipment and implement



best management practices to assure that impacts are minimized and that any minor spills are immediately and properly remediated. The Specific Plan land use plan allows residential, commercial, office, and institutional development that can be expected to use and store limited quantities and types of potentially hazardous materials, such as cleaning chemicals, solvents, gasoline, and oils. However, heavy industrial facilities, waste and landfill operations, and other generators and handlers of hazardous materials are not proposed in the planning area. Individual developments may be required to conduct Phase I Initial Site Assessments to evaluate site-specific conditions and/or implement appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to address potential impacts. Given the types of land uses that would be developed in the planning area and implementation of site-specific mitigation measures where necessary, the risks of accidental release or upset are expected to be less than significant; however, potential impacts should be further evaluated in the EIR.

- c) **Less Than Significant.** The nearest school to the planning area is the Rancho Mirage Elementary School, located on Indian Trail approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of Highway 111. However, as described in responses 9.a and 9.b. above, impacts associated with hazardous materials in the planning area are expected to be less than significant. Nonetheless, potential impacts should be further evaluated in the EIR.
- d) **No Impact.** According to the County of Riverside EIR No. 521¹ and California Department of Toxic Substances Control “EnviroStor” Database, the planning area does not contain any parcel included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Nevertheless, future development could require Phase I Environmental Site Assessments and subsequent procedures, if necessary, to eliminate or minimize the potential hazards. No impact is anticipated.
- e) **No Impact.** The planning area is not located within an airport land use plan or private airstrip. The planning area is 4± miles from the Palm Springs International Airport and 7± miles from the Bermuda Dunes Airport. Therefore, the Specific Plan will not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people in the planning area. No impact will occur.
- f) **Less Than Significant.** The City of Rancho Mirage has a Multi-Hazard Functional Plan, originally adopted in 1994, which is continually updated. The two main evacuation routes in the City include I-10 and Highway 111, along with primary and minor arterial streets serving as secondary routes. Since earthquakes, floods, fires, or other disasters may render certain routes impassible, specific evacuation routes are not identified in the plan because they can change depending upon the type of emergency.

Future development and improvements facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan may require temporary lane closures, detours, or re-routing. However, Construction Traffic Control Plans may be prepared for Specific Plan projects, and emergency/secondary access would be established and preserved during all construction activities. At buildout of the Specific Plan, improved roadway capacity and access to properties may enhance access for emergency vehicles. Therefore, it is anticipated that the Specific Plan will have a less than significant impact on the adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan. Nonetheless, potential impacts will be further addressed in the EIR.

- g) **Less Than Significant.** The wildland fire hazard in Rancho Mirage is relatively low because most of the rugged terrain is so steep, rocky, and dry that few plants thrive in the area. As a result, the amount of fuel available for wildland fires is very limited, and the distance between stands of vegetation is too great for fires to spread easily. In the developed areas, the landscape vegetation is carefully maintained and watered regularly, creating conditions that limit the possibility for vegetation fires to ignite and spread.

¹ Table 4.13-A and Figure 4.13.1, County of Riverside Environmental Impact Report No. 521 Public Review Draft, February 2015.



CALFIRE is actively updating state-wide fire hazard zone maps, and at this time it is uncertain whether any portion of the planning area or adjoining lands are located within a fire zone classified as either a state responsibility area or lands classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone. Currently, the Bighorn Cove Planning Area is partially classified as a moderate fire threat zone. Although the West Gateway and the Thunder Road planning areas are near two Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, those two zones are of very limited size, and the historical record indicates that the wildland fire hazard in Rancho Mirage is relatively low.

The Specific Plan will not exacerbate the wildfire risks of the site or surrounding lands, nor is it expected to create a significant exposure threat to potential occupants or surrounding receptors to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire. Future development facilitated by the Specific Plan is not expected to increase exposure of people or structures to significant fire or fire-related risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Development and improvements will be required to adhere to applicable fire codes and will be subject to review by the Fire Department. Impacts are expected to be less than significant but will nonetheless be further analyzed in the EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: City of Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Preliminary Hydrology Report, TTM 37122, MSA Consulting, 2016; Updated Jurisdictional Maps for MS-4 System, City of Rancho Mirage, 2018.

Background:

The climate conditions in the Coachella Valley are characterized as “subtropical desert.” Meaning annual rainfall is very low on the desert floor and into the foothills, ranging from 2 to 4 inches per year on the valley floor and averaging about 5 to 6 inches along the foothills. Generally, temperatures decrease and precipitation increases with increasing elevation. In some years, no measurable rainfall has been reported on portions of the valley floor. Most of the valley’s rainfall occurs during the cooler months of November through March, but occasional high-intensity thunderstorms and tropical storms occur in late summer and early fall. Although the ground may be generally dry at the beginning of a storm, sufficient amounts and intensities of rainfall can saturate the surface, substantially reducing percolation and increasing runoff.

Four types of storm events (i.e. general winter storms, combining high-intensity rainfall, rapid melting of the mountain snowpack, and summer thunderstorms) cause flooding in the Coachella Valley. Summer storms pose a greater threat of localized flooding than winter storms because of their high intensity and short duration of rainfall. Monsoons, and warm winter storms with snowmelt, can generate significant runoff over a much larger area. The planning area is located between the Santa Rosa foothills and the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel and is crossed by numerous surface and underground conveyance facilities that connect local runoff to the stormwater channel. In addition to existing facilities, including the East and West Magnesia Falls Channels, there are developable lands that do not yet benefit from on-site stormwater facilities.



- a) **Less Than Significant.** The proposed Specific Plan would facilitate future building demolition and construction, grading, paving, and other development and improvement projects. Future development will utilize city drainage facilities and may require additional on-site facilities, including temporary stormwater retention basins. City and Regional Water Quality Control Board review would ensure that construction and operational best management practices (BMPs) satisfy local, state, and federal standards. In addition, the City would require preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in conformance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) prior to the issuance of grading permits. New construction would be required to connect to the existing CVWD sewer system in compliance with applicable standards that minimize impacts to regional groundwater quality. Impacts are expected to be less than significant; however potential impacts should be further discussed in the forthcoming EIR.
- b) **Less Than Significant.** It is uncertain at this time what the water demand from for new development facilitated by the Specific Plan could be. The forthcoming EIR should analyze existing supply compared to water demand at buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. The proposed Specific Plan promotes drought-tolerant landscaping and water-efficient buildings, structures, and appliances. New construction will be required to comply with Title 24 provisions, which will limit water demand. Regional domestic water is supplied by groundwater supplemented with imported water. Water consumed during construction should be minimal and temporary, while post-development water demand could be greater than current demand. Buildout of the planning area in accordance with the Specific Plan is not expected to substantially deplete local groundwater supplies or have a significant impact on groundwater supplies or recharge. Nevertheless, the forthcoming EIR should further evaluate water demand and opportunities for conservation.
- c.i) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The Specific Plan will facilitate development projects that will result in grading, excavation, and other modifications to the ground surface, and have the potential to result in erosion and/or siltation on- and off-site. However, the City requires projects to implement effective erosion control measures. Development in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan is not expected to alter the existing drainage pattern in a manner that would cause substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. Nevertheless, the forthcoming EIR should evaluate this potential and provide avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures that ensure that impacts are less than significant.
- c.ii) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** Development and improvement projects facilitated by the Specific Plan could increase the rate and/or amount of surface runoff in the planning area. With the provision of on-site stormwater retention and implementation of required Best Management Practices (BMPs), no significant or substantially increased rate or amount of runoff is anticipated. Nonetheless, the management of stormwater runoff should be further evaluated in the EIR.
- c.iii) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan will result in new and/or modified development and improvements that could increase stormwater runoff; however, the City requires the retention of stormwater onsite, and increased runoff is not expected to exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. The forthcoming EIR will further address issues of surface and groundwater pollution and ensure that potential impacts are less than significant or mitigated, as necessary.
- c.iv) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan will result in grading, excavation, construction, and other modifications to the ground surface that could redirect flood flows. However, the City requires thoughtful and effective stormwater management plans that retain runoff onsite, effectively direct flood flows, and include other improvements, as necessary, to ensure that the City's system of surface and subsurface runoff conveyance is properly constructed and maintained. The EIR should further evaluate potential impacts and the need for minimization and/or mitigation measures.



- d) **Less Than Significant.** Most of the planning area north of Mirage Road is located outside of any FEMA flood zone. Some streets in the Magnesia Falls South and Las Palmas Planning Areas are located in Zone A, which designates Special Flood Hazard Areas inundated by 100-year flood. The remaining planning area is located in Zone X, which designates areas of 500-year flood (0.2% chance of flooding in any given year, areas of 100-year flood with average depth of less than 1 foot or with drainage area less than 1 square mile, or areas protected from 100-year flood by levees). No structures for human occupancy would occur within the 100-year flood zone as a result of Specific Plan implementation. No critical facilities such as schools are proposed within the 500-year flood zone in the Specific Plan. Facilities using, storing, or otherwise involved with substantial quantities of on-site hazardous materials will not be permitted in the flood zones.

The planning area is located inland, well outside of any tsunami zones. There are two water storage reservoirs located above and upstream of Bighorn Cove that could be adversely affected if a breach in these tanks were to occur. Two additional water reservoirs are located at the south end of Gardess Road in the Magnesia Falls Cove neighborhood, which if breached would discharge into the East Magnesia Falls Channel. Whether homes in this area or properties along the Highway 111 corridor could be adversely impacted by such tank breaches should be further analysed in the forthcoming EIR. Adherence to zoning and other requirements and standards in the proposed Specific Plan would ensure that no significant impact would occur regarding release of pollutants due to inundation. Nonetheless, potential impacts should be further analyzed in the EIR.

- e) **No Impact.** Future development and improvements according to the proposed Specific Plan will be required to conform to applicable water quality regulations and Water Quality Management Plans. The proposed Specific Plan will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



11. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Rancho Mirage Municipal Code; East Highway 111 Specific Plan, 2014; West Highway 111 Specific Plan, 2014.

Background:

The City and the Coachella Valley are located in the central portion of Riverside County at the westernmost limits of the Sonoran Desert, also known as the Colorado Desert. The San Jacinto Mountains and San Bernardino Mountains form the western portions of the valley, while the Little San Bernardino and Santa Rosa Mountains form the northern and southern boundaries, respectively. Much of the urbanization in the City and valley has initially taken place along the toe of the slopes of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, and has spread progressively onto the valley floor and southeastward from the Palm Springs area through Coachella to the communities of Thermal and Mecca.

The region is noted for prime agricultural lands in the eastern valley areas, and for resort residential and world-class tourist developments primarily in the western and central portions of the valley, although this trend is continuing to move east. In the western portions of the valley, including Rancho Mirage, agriculture developed (primarily dates and citrus) early in the 20th Century gave way to resort, residential and commercial development. The area's natural assets, including mountain views, varied wildlife and sunny weather, and a dependable water supply, have become progressively important to the local economy and environment, and have contributed to the region's character and desirability.

- a) **Less Than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in the physical division of an established community. Instead, the Specific Plan would set forth a coherent and cohesive set of standards and guidelines that enhance established neighborhoods and communities along the Highway 111 corridor and facilitate a unified sense of place through architectural, landscaping, signage, and lighting programs. Moreover, one of the primary purposes of land use planning is to minimize the impacts of land use changes to adjacent areas and to ensure the compatibility of these uses. The Specific Plan encourages the enhancement of the existing community through infill development and development of compatible uses along the Highway 111 corridor. Impacts are expected to be less than significant but should be further analyzed in the EIR.
- b) **Potentially Significant.** The proposed Specific Plan generally maintains the basic land use distribution envisioned in the General Plan, but it revises some land use designations and acreages, increases residential densities in some portions of the planning area, and reduces parking requirement for some complementary land uses. The Specific Plan will supersede certain provisions or regulations of the City's Zoning Ordinance as applied to the planning area, and will revise and update the 2014 East and West Highway 111 Specific Plans, but is also designed to be compatible with surrounding existing and planned land uses. Conflicts between the Specific Plan and other land use plans and policies could cause environmental impacts, and therefore, should be evaluated in the forthcoming EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



12. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Updated Mineral Land Classification Map for Portland Cement Concrete-Grade Aggregate in the Palm Springs Production-Consumption Region, Riverside County, California by Lawrence L. Busch, 2007.

Background:

In the Coachella Valley, mineral resources are largely limited to aggregates, such as sand, gravel, and crushed stone. These are major components of concrete, plaster, stucco, road base and fill, which are essential to the construction industry. There are important deposits of these materials that occur within the region that are being actively developed.

Other mineral deposits in the region are generally limited to rocky outcroppings within the Little San Bernardino and Santa Rosa Mountains and have not been mined. These resources include copper, limestone, specialty sands, and tungsten. There are decorative stone deposits that are being mined on public land in the Painted Hills area west of Desert Hot Springs, as well as clay deposits at the base of the Mecca Hills east of Thermal on public and private land. These may be used as an impermeable layer for lining landfills, ponds, and similar construction applications, and some of these deposits have been permitted for mining.

- a,b) **No Impact.** The planning area is located within Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) 3, defined as areas containing known or inferred mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance. Nowhere in the planning area are areas designated, used, or planned for mineral resource extraction or development. In addition, the planning area is about 75% developed with urban uses and surrounded by existing urban development, making it unsuitable for mineral extraction operations. The proposed Specific Plan would result in no impacts to mineral resources.

Mitigation: None required

Monitoring: None required



13. NOISE -- Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017.

Background:

Noise can be defined as “unwanted sound.” Excessive and/or sustained noise can contribute to both temporary and permanent physical impairments, such as hearing loss and increased fatigue, as well as stress, annoyance, anxiety, and other psychological reactions in humans. The evaluation and mitigation of noise in a community is essential to protecting the health and welfare of the general public, and preserving the inherent value of recreation, open space, and conservation lands. Furthermore, it can help define the need for additional remedial measures that mitigate noise problems. Noise propagation can also be affected by terrain and surrounding development. A noise study is being prepared in conjunction with the Specific Plan and forthcoming EIR.

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The City regulates noise-generating activities through the Municipal Code and requires that daytime noise levels be 65 dBA CNEL or less at the property line for commercial and 60 dBA CNEL for residential, and 45 dBA CNEL or less for all interior areas. Existing land uses within the planning area and vicinity include residential, commercial, office and institutional uses. Traffic noise on Highway 111 represents the primary source of noise in the planning area.

Buildout of the planning area in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan will result in site preparation, demolition, grading, excavation, construction, paving, and related activities. Construction will result in localized and temporary increases in ambient noise levels and may impact sensitive receptors. The City recognizes that construction noise is difficult to control and restricts allowable hours. Section 8.45.030 of the City's Municipal Code provides for an exemption of construction generated noise if a building permit from the City has been issued and construction occurs between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. These restrictions, muffling of construction equipment, and other measures will reduce, to some extent, construction noise impacts on surrounding land uses. Impacts will be temporary and will end once construction is complete.



Long-term operation of projects facilitated by the Specific Plan will result in permanent increases in ambient noise levels in the planning area. However, proposed land uses are consistent with the existing Highway 111 urban commercial and residential environment, and noise sources are expected to be similar to those already operating in the planning area. Noise sources are expected to include vehicle traffic, mechanical equipment such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units, loading and unloading operations, and parking lot activities.

Future development projects may require site-specific noise monitoring and modeling for both construction and post-construction periods conducted at locations surrounding the project site, including in proximity to sensitive receptors. Overall, impacts are expected to be less than significant with appropriate mitigation. The forthcoming EIR and associated noise study will further evaluate the potential noise impacts associated with implementation of the Specific Plan.

- b) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** Development facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan is not expected to result in permanent excessive groundborne vibration or noise. Short-term increases in this type of vibration and noise would be limited to demolition and construction phases, including foundation and pad removals, and the use of heavy grading, hauling, and compacting equipment. Impacts would be short-term in nature and would occur during the less sensitive daytime hours. In the overall, these impacts are expected to be less than significant with appropriate mitigation. Impacts will be further evaluated in the EIR.
- c) **No Impact.** The planning area is not located within two miles of any airport, private or public. The Palm Springs International Airport is approximately 4 miles to the northwest, and the Bermuda Dunes Airport is approximately 7 miles to the east. The City of Rancho Mirage lies outside of and beyond the boundaries of an airport planning area. No impact would occur.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



14. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; 2016 RTP/SCS, Demographics & Growth Forecast Appendix, Southern California Association of Governments; Highway 111 Specific Plan Preliminary Socio-Economic Analysis, Terra Nova Planning & Research, 2020.

Background: The Rancho Mirage population increased 30% between 2000 and 2010, from 13,249 to 17,218. The latest (2019) population estimate is 18,489. SCAG projects the City's population will grow to 25,000 by 2040. Local housing products include a mix of single- and multi-family units, and a smaller number of mobile homes. While the potential for new residential development is limited under the current Specific Plans, the proposed Project could increase allowable number of residential units and at substantially higher densities than are currently allowed.

- a) **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The proposed Specific Plan will facilitate new planned residential development in the planning area, including opportunities primarily for high-density residential land uses, which would directly result in population growth. At the same time, the proposed Project could enhance the City's ability to meet its affordable housing needs for the coming years and create additional affordable housing (market-rate and subsidized). The Specific Plan also designates commercial (such as office, neighborhood commercial, general commercial) and mixed-use commercial uses which could lead, indirectly, to population growth by providing new employment opportunities, although the total potential for these uses may be less under the proposed Project. The planning area is well-served by existing roads and infrastructure. Although parcel-scale extensions and improvements will be required as development occurs, they are not expected to induce substantial additional growth. Population growth in the planning area is planned and anticipated by the City. However, the proposed Specific Plan could increase the potential for new housing units from 130 under the current plan to 1,176 units under the proposed plan. In either case, future development within the Highway 111 corridor is not expected to exceed SCAG growth projections. The potential increase in housing and area population should be further evaluated in the EIR. The EIR will estimate the buildout population in the planning area and compare it to projections to further evaluate potential population growth impacts.
- b) **No Impact.** The Specific Plan proposes very limited redevelopment or demolition of approximately four existing residences, the loss of which would be more than made up with other residential development in the planning area. Therefore, the Project is not expected to displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing nor necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Mitigation: None required

Monitoring: None required



15. PUBLIC SERVICES –	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017.

Background:

Fire protection, first response, emergency medical services, and natural disaster preparedness services in the City are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) under contract to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). The City is a member of the Cove Communities Services Commission, which includes the cities of Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage, and Indian Wells.

Police protection in Rancho Mirage is provided on a service contract basis by the Riverside County Sheriff's Department that operates out of the Palm Desert Station. The current agreement went into effect on July 1, 2016 and is a five-year contract that will expire on June 30, 2021.

Two school districts, Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD) and Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD), serve the City. One private school, the Palm Valley School, also provides K-12 education in the City.

a) **Less Than Significant.**

Fire

Fire protection and emergency services in the City are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department, under City contract. One of the two fire stations in Rancho Mirage is within the Central Corridor Planning Area and serves the entire planning area. Emergency and secondary roadway access may be temporarily affected during construction of projects facilitated by the Specific Plan. However, project-specific construction traffic control plans implemented during construction will assure that impacts to mobility and accessibility in the area will be less than significant. Additional structures and population in the planning area, as facilitated by the Specific Plan, may increase the demand for fire protection services. The Specific Plan will include access drive, ingress/egress, and other transportation/circulation guidelines that are expected to increase roadway safety and capacity and decrease traffic delays, potentially leading to enhanced site access and shorter response times in the planning area. Potential impacts will be further evaluated in the EIR.



Police

Police protection in the City is provided by the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, under City contract. The nearest police station is located at City Hall within the western portion of the planning area. A police sub-station is also staffed at the City Library in the central portion of the planning area. The Sheriff's Department headquarters is located approximately 3.25 (aerial) miles northeast of the planning area at 73705 Gerald Ford Drive in the City of Palm Desert. Buildout of the planning area in accordance with the Specific Plan may result in additional demand for police protection services. Potential impacts will be further analyzed in the EIR.

Schools

The Rancho Mirage Elementary School is located 1/4± mile southwest of the planning area. All but the southeast corner of the planning area is located within the boundaries of the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD), with lands east of Bob Hope Drive being located within the Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD). Future population growth facilitated by the Specific Plan is expected to increase kindergarten through 12th grade student enrollment within the PSUSD system. New development will be required to pay mandated school impact fees, which will reduce potential impacts to some extent.

Parks

The City owns and maintains mini-parks, local parks, and community parks, including the Cancer Survivors Park and Rancho Mirage Community Park, both located in the planning area. Population growth resulting from implementation of the Specific Plan will increase demand for park and/or recreation facilities. While Project impacts to City parks and open space amenities are expected to be less than significant, potential impacts will be further analyzed in the EIR.

Other Public Facilities

Additional public facilities in the planning area include City Hall, the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory, and post office. Population growth facilitated by the Specific Plan may increase the use of these and other public facilities in the City and broader Coachella Valley. Potential impacts will be analyzed in the EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



16. RECREATION –	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017.

Background:

The City of Rancho Mirage offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities, including golf courses, bikeways, and parkland. The City is also located near thousands of acres of National Park and National Monument lands, and U.S. Forest Service wilderness lands, as well as state, regional, and tribal parks, within which are miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails. The Cancer Survivors Park and Rancho Mirage Community Park are both located in the planning area.

- a) **Less Than Significant.** In the planning area and immediate vicinity, recreational resources include hiking and equestrian trails, Rancho Mirage Community Park, Cancer Survivor Park, Wolfson Park, Magnesia Falls Park, and Blixseth Mountain Park, as well as adjacent nature trails. The proposed Specific Plan will lead to an increase in the local population and, therefore, will increase demand on City recreational facilities. New development will be required to pay mandated development impact fees to mitigate the impacts associated with additional need for public facilities. While impacts are expected to be less than significant, the EIR will further analyze the Project's impacts on parks and other recreational facilities resulting from implementation of the Specific Plan.
- b) **Less Than Significant.** The Specific Plan increases public park acreage and could facilitate additional private recreational facilities in areas designated for residential/commercial uses. Construction of such facilities would be subject to applicable building codes and other regulations that would minimize any potential adverse physical effects on the environment. While Project impacts to City parks and open space amenities are expected to be less than significant, potential impacts resulting from the Specific Plan will be further analyzed in the EIR.

Mitigation: None required

Monitoring: None required



17. TRANSPORTATION – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Traffic Impact Analysis for the Rancho Mirage General Plan Update (2017), Urban Crossroads, Inc., March 2017; CVAG Annual Traffic Counts, 2017.

Background:

Regional connectivity in the Coachella Valley is provided by Interstate 10 (I-10), Highway 111, and State Routes 62 and 74. I-10 extends through the valley in a northwest-southeasterly trending direction and connects the region to western Riverside County and the Los Angeles metropolitan area to the west, and desert communities and Arizona to the east. Highway 111 is south of and roughly parallel to I-10. Highway 111 accommodates local and regional traffic through one of the City's principal commercial corridors and connects to other Coachella Valley communities, from Palm Springs on the west to the Salton Sea and Imperial County on the east. Traffic volumes in 2017 along the subject Highway 111 corridor ranged between 38,000± and 47,000± vehicles per day.

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The proposed Specific Plan will result in an intensification of some land uses and a lower of intensity of some uses along the Highway 111 corridor, including increased residential densities, which could impact traffic volumes and intersection operations and reduced commercial that could more than offset increases associated with additional residential development. The Specific Plan will promote circulation components and urban design that enhance traffic operations and multi-modal access and safety, and consolidated driveway access on Highway 111. The extent to which these may conflict with (or enhance) a program, plan, ordinance, or policy is currently unknown. A traffic impact analysis will be prepared to further analyze the potential effects of the proposed Specific Plan on local circulation plans, as well as transit and other alternative modes of travel. Potential impacts and the need for mitigation measures will be further analyzed in the EIR.
- b) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The proposed Specific Plan is not expected to conflict with or be inconsistent with Section 15064.3(b) of the CEQA Guidelines. The Highway 111 corridor is well-served by SunLine Transit Agency's bus Line 111 with multiple bus stops, and all development in the planning area is expected to be within one-half mile of an existing transit stop. The Specific Plan will address multi-modal access improvements and other design elements intended to reduce potential trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMTs). The extent to which these may conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) is currently unknown. The potential for VMTs resulting from Specific Plan implementation to exceed an applicable threshold of significance should be further evaluated in the EIR and traffic impact analysis.



- c) **Less Than Significant.** The proposed Specific Plan will not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric feature or incompatible uses. The roadway network in the planning area will remain largely unchanged from existing conditions; no hazardous features are proposed. The Specific Plan will address roadway improvements that are designed to improve safety, efficiency, and accessibility. Proposed land uses (residential, commercial, mixed use, office and institutional) are largely consistent with existing land uses, and the future vehicle mix will be comparable to the existing mix. Nonetheless, potential impacts will be further evaluated in the forthcoming EIR.
- d) **Less Than Significant.** Construction and operational activities resulting from the Specific Plan will not significantly impact the ability of emergency service providers, including the Rancho Mirage Police and Fire Departments, to provide services to the planning area. Site-specific traffic control plans will be prepared, as needed, to maintain safe traffic flow during construction to assure that emergency service access is not interrupted during construction. The Specific Plan will address roadway efficiency, safety, and accessibility that may result in a net positive benefit for emergency access. Overall, impacts to emergency services are expected to be beneficial; nonetheless, potential impacts will be further analyzed in the EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Cultural Resources Report/Rancho Mirage General Plan, CRM TECH, 1996.

Background:

The Cahuilla Indians have inhabited the valley for centuries. They are a Takic-speaking people of hunters and gatherers generally and traditionally divided into three groups based on their geographic setting: the Pass Cahuilla of the San Geronio Pass – Palm Springs area; the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and the Cahuilla Valley; and the Desert Cahuilla of the eastern Coachella Valley. Today, Native Americans of Pass or Desert Cahuilla heritage are mainly affiliated with the Indian tribes of the Coachella Valley, including the Cabazon, Augustine, Torres Martinez, Twenty-nine Palms, Agua Caliente, and Morongo.

The planning area is located in a traditional use area of the Cahuilla, and the western portion of the planning area includes limited lands within the boundaries of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Reservation. The potential for the developed areas to harbor tribal cultural resources, such as a site, feature, place, or cultural landscape, is considered to be low given the disturbed nature of those areas. However, undisturbed and undeveloped lands, especially those near the foothills of Santa Rosa Mountains, have a higher potential to harbor tribal cultural resources as the mountain foothills and canyons were used by the Cahuilla for food and fiber, water (streams), and cooler conditions compared to the desert floor. Many archaeological artifacts have been found around the foothills and canyons.

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan will facilitate demolition, grading, excavation, and new development that has the potential to impact tribal cultural resources if they occur on a project site.

- i, ii) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** According to the Rancho Mirage General Plan, there are six Cahuilla cultural heritage sites within the city boundary. As discussed in 5.b above, portions of the planning area contain culturally sensitive areas. The planning area is in the traditional use area of the Cahuilla. Consistent with AB 52 and SB-18, the City will solicit input from the California Native American Heritage Commission and initiate consultation with the appropriate tribes, notifying them of the proposed Specific Plan and its proposed land use plan.



Site-specific cultural resources studies may be required for future development projects facilitated by the Specific Plan, and mitigation measures may be required. Potential impacts will be further analyzed in the EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017.

Background:

The planning area is connected to the utilities network and served by the following providers:

Utility	Service Provider(s)
Electricity	Rancho Mirage Energy Authority; South California Edison (SCE)
Natural gas	Southern California Gas
Water	Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)
Wastewater	Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)
Solid waste	Burrtec
Telecommunications	Spectrum, Frontier, Hughes Net

- a) **Less Than Significant.** The Specific Plan planning area has been largely developed for many decades and is well-served by utility providers and infrastructure. Future development projects facilitated by the Specific Plan will require site-specific, parcel-scale utility extensions and/or upgrades, such as water and sewer laterals. However, given that large-scale water and sewer trunk lines and energy transmission lines are already in place, the construction of new or expanded extensions is not expected to cause significant environmental effects. Nonetheless, potential impacts will be further analyzed in the EIR.
- b) **Less Than Significant.** Domestic water is provided by the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), which utilizes wells and elevated storage to source and provide pressure to its customer service network. Groundwater, imported water, surface water, and recycled water are the supply sources available within



CVWD's service area. CVWD has existing water entitlements, rights, and contracts to meet future demand as needed over time, and has committed sufficient capital resources and planned investments in various water programs and facilities to serve existing and future customers.

To assure that sufficient supplies are and will continue to be available to meet demands, CVWD adopted the Water Management Plan in September 2012 and an Urban Water Management Plan in 2010, and prepares annual Engineers Reports that update and detail water use and supply. These water management documents provide specifics on the current water conditions within the Coachella Valley, as well as information on water production and supplies, groundwater recharge and replenishment activities, cooperative agreements, conservation, and water quality data. Potential changes in domestic water generation associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan will be documented in the forthcoming EIR.

- c) **Less Than Significant.** Wastewater is collected by CVWD collector facilities and conveyed to trunk sewers to the CVWD Cook Street plant for treatment, which has sufficient available capacity to manage increased demand for wastewater conveyance and treatment. Nonetheless, the City will confer with the local service provider, and potential changes in wastewater generation and collection and treatment capacities will be documented in the forthcoming EIR.
- d) **Less Than Significant.** The City contracts with Burrtec for provision of solid waste management and disposal services. A variety of residential and commercial services are available from the service provider, including basic twice-weekly residential pickup. Burrtec also offers other services to large waste generators, including restaurants, retailers, and hotels and resorts. Solid waste generated in the City is taken to the Lamb Canyon landfill in Beaumont or, as an alternative, the Badlands Landfill in Moreno Valley.

Buildout of the planning area in accordance with the Specific Plan will increase solid waste generation, including concrete, asphalt, a variety of construction materials, paper and food waste, and other trash disposed of during long-term operation. Implementation of recycling programs, in accordance with State and City regulations, will reduce solid waste quantities. Whether the landfill capacity will be adequate to serve the buildout of the Specific Plan will be analyzed in the forthcoming EIR.

- e) **No Impact.** The City and Burrtec operate in compliance with federal, state, and local statutes regulating solid waste. Development in the planning area in accordance with the Specific Plan will not conflict with federal, state, and local statutes regulating the disposal of solid waste. There will be no impacts.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



20. WILDFIRE – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources: Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017; Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones mapping, CalFire.

Background:

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) ranks fire hazard of wildland areas of the state using four main criteria: fuels, weather, assets at risk, and level of service. Although Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are mapped in the Rancho Mirage area, the historical record indicates that the wildland fire hazard in Rancho Mirage is relatively low. CalFire has mapped several Fire Threat Zones in Rancho Mirage and the SOI.

- a-d) **Less Than Significant.** The planning area is not located within a fire zone classified as either a state responsibility area or a very high fire hazard severity zone. Although the West Gateway and Thunder Road planning areas are near two Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, those zones are of very limited size, and the historical record indicates that the wildland fire hazard in Rancho Mirage is relatively low. The City maintains a Multi-Hazard Functional Plan that addresses the planned response to extraordinary emergency situations, including natural or human-caused disasters. The Specific Plan would not impair the adopted emergency response plan.

The implementation of the Specific Plan has the potential to exacerbate wildfire risks in the planning area or on surrounding lands. While it is not expected to create a significant exposure threat to occupants or surrounding receptors to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire this potential should be further analysed. The City may require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities), as needed, in individual development projects within the Specific Plan area as development plans are reviewed.

The wildland fire hazard in Rancho Mirage is relatively low because most of the rugged terrain is steep, rocky, and dry that few plants thrive in the area. As a result, the amount of fuel available for wildland fires is very limited, and the distance between stands of vegetation is too great for fires to spread easily. In the developed areas, the landscape vegetation is carefully maintained and watered regularly, creating conditions



that limit the possibility for vegetation fires to ignite and spread. The development of the Specific Plan is not expected to increase exposure of people or structures to significant fire or fire-related risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. These effects are expected to be less than significant but will nonetheless be further analyzed in the EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** As discussed in Sections 4 (Biological Resources) and 5 (Cultural Resources), implementation of the proposed Specific Plan is expected to have less than significant impacts to biological and cultural resources with implementation of mitigation measures. The EIR will evaluate these topics in greater detail to determine whether the Specific Plan would generate significant environmental impacts and provide mitigation measures, where necessary.
- b) **Less Than Significant.** Impacts of the proposed Specific Plan are not expected to be cumulatively considerable because its proposed land use plan, standards, and guidelines are largely consistent with those of the General Plan and 2014 East and West Highway 111 Specific Plans that are already in place. While the proposed Specific Plan modifies and updates existing land uses and guidelines, it does not represent a radical departure from them, and its incremental effects are not considerable when viewed in connection with other projects. The EIR will evaluate these topics in greater detail to determine whether the Specific Plan would generate cumulative considerable impacts.
- c) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation.** The proposed Specific Plan could cause direct and indirect potentially significant adverse effects on humans, specifically as it relates to aesthetics, air quality, greenhouse gases, land use, and transportation. The significance of these impacts will be evaluated in the EIR.

Mitigation: See forthcoming EIR

Monitoring: See forthcoming EIR



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